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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: COINS Evaluation Plan

The Problem:

    We are requested and required to develop a plan for the evaluation
of the community on-line intelligence system which

    1. Can be completed within six to nine months after the communica-
tions system goes into effect.

    2. Will yield objective measures of the system's effectiveness.

    3. Will answer all the standard questions asked by management.

    In general, since COINS I was aimed to solve the practical problems
involved in inter-agency exchange of formatted records and not toward the
solution of specific intelligence problems, we cannot expect to be able
to demonstrate the value of such an exchange system without the addition
of other files to the system. Hence, we cannot expect to be able to
determine whether or not the system is worth what it will cost within the
given timeframe.

The Decisions:

I. In order to attack this problem, we have decided to separate it into
three independent sub-problems:

    A. The evaluation of the performance characteristics of the system.

        In this phase, we shall control the input to the system and
measure the response.

        To be exact, we shall

        1. Determine the set of queries which may be sent from each agency
to each other agency.

        2. Vary the number of queries sent at each hour of the day.

        3. Measure the response time, the queue length, and the error
rate at each decision point of the system.

    B. The evaluation of the initial usage of the system.

        In this phase, we shall measure the input to the system and
classify the response.

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To be exact, we shall

1. Determine the number of analysts at each agency who use information on COINS subjects whether taken from the current COINS files or other central files or personal files.

2. Determine the number of times per week each analyst refers to each type of file.

3. Accept the analyst's classification of the answer from each type of file as satisfactory or not.

4. Accept the analyst's classification of unsatisfactory answers from COINS by reason as follows:

    a. unduly delayed
    b. outdated
    c. inaccurate
    d. containing too many records not relevant to the query.
    e. containing no record relevant to the query.

C. The evaluation of the potential value of the system.

Since it is recognized that the value of an information exchange system depends in the last analysis on its contribution to the solution of intelligence problems, we have decided to include contingent plans for testing the limits of the system.

The implementation of these plans is contingent upon

    a. a decision by the agencies involved to make a joint effort to close a specific intelligence gap and precise definition of the objectives.

    b. the assignment of skilled analysts from each agency to the task force.

    c. The inclusion of the appropriate files in the COINS system and provision for access to other sources of information by all analysts involved.

The selection of the specific intelligence problems to be proposed is still an open question; decisions made in this area will however, not affect the implementation of Phases A and B.

Implementation:

25X1   [ ] of the National Security Agency is directed to proceed with the development of the statistical and mathematical model for evaluation of the system performance characteristics and of the initial usage on the basis of the foregoing decisions.

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25X1   [_____] (DIA)   [_____] (NPIC)   25X1

25X1   [_____] (NSA)   [_____] (RADC)   25X1

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25X1   [_____] (DIA)   [_____] (CIA)   25X1

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Downgraded at 12 year
intervals; not
automatically declassified

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6. The Panel decided that each member should consider the objectives and be prepared at the next meeting to suggest specific problems which might be attached with the aid of COINS. From these suggestions and the communications evaluation plan submitted by [   ] a draft plan for submission to COBIS will be developed. The next meeting will be held at DIA, 29 November 1966, 1000 hours.

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